

THIEU SENDS MESSAGE TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

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[Message from RVN President Nguyen Van Thieu to the RVN National Assembly at the opening of its ordinary session on 2 October 1972]

[Text] Mr Chairman of the Senate, Mr Speaker of the House of Representatives, Messrs senators and representatives:

Today, on the occasion of the opening of the National Assembly's October 1972 ordinary session, I convey to you gentlemen my greetings and have the honor of presenting two problems to you on the situation and peace.

The Situation

I am sure that in recent months you gentlemen and all our people have followed the situation every hour and minute and ardently expected our armed forces to defeat aggression, reoccupy our territory, and rapidly restore the situation which must be at least as good as that prior to 29 March 1972.

Our ultimate goal is not only to defeat the aggressor communists in the south but also to deprive the communists of any strength from wherever it may come and to strengthen our might so as to force the communists to renounce their aggressive schemes and acts. Security in the south will then be truly and firmly maintained and if a peace solution is to come about, we can hopefully expect it to be guaranteed so the southern people will be able to live peacefully to permanently develop their country.

We are progressing toward attaining this ultimate goal at all costs.

In talking about the situation prior to 29 March 1972, I wish to recall that on that day, especially in our South Vietnam as well as in North Vietnam and on the territories of the Khmer Republic and Laos, the communists still had considerable forces: First, the flow of supplies from the red imperialists to North Vietnam and the rate of supply and infiltration from the north to the south were the strongest ever; and second, the communists were ready to launch a large-scale offensive called the final phase of the aggressive war in the south in 1972.

Although as of 29 March 1972 the territorial security as well as the pacification and development results in our South Vietnam were the most satisfactory so far, our problem continued to be that of coping with and defeating this large-scale offensive.

Should what I called "a decisive confrontation of forces between our army and that of the communists prior to the emergence of a peace solution" occur, this threat would be solved once and for all and the situation in our South Vietnam would be stabilized.

IV. 3 Oct 72

Only after this confrontation of forces, will the war dwindle and a peace solution be attained with some hope of success.

This confrontation has occurred and we are liquidating these forces.

Even if the situation prior to 29 March 1972 is reestablished, we will not be satisfied with it and we cannot halt there.

Our ultimate goal is not as simple as this.

This means that we must not only recapture all our land and recontrol all the southern people, but we must also deprive the communists in the south and the north of their capabilities to replay their old tricks.

I maintain that united and of a single mind, all our armed forces and people will succeed in accomplishing this.

Between us and the communists, those who are persevering will win.

If we want to live, we must win. Therefore, we must persevere.

Peace

For the past few years everyone has talked about peace. In recent months more and more talk has been heard about peace, about one solution or another, about the coming cease-fire and so forth.

I would like to reiterate that our south itself hopes more than anyone else that peace will soon come and we ourselves have worked harder and gone farther than anyone else.

On the other hand, the communists yell for peace louder than anyone else but they are more stubborn and teacherous than anyone else.

We are not afraid of a cease-fire, nor do we evade it. We ourselves hope a cease-fire will soon come so peace will be restored quickly. We have also many times demanded talks on an immediate cease-fire. Meanwhile it is the communists who are more afraid of a cease-fire than anyone else.

Until 29 March, those innocent people who had been rocked to sleep and misled into supporting the communists and those who had falsely accused the RVN of being an impediment to peace perhaps renounced their sophism in favor of the communists.

Since that day the communists have openly laid bare their true faces of deceit. They arrived in Paris over 3 years ago, not to negotiate peace seriously with a peaceful will but to save the north from bombings pending a complete U.S. troop withdrawal and to prepare adequate means, awaiting the most favorable moment, in the hope that can defeat the RVN by force.

In the past 3 years and more, the communists have refused to negotiate peace seriously because they had at their disposal 15 infantry divisions, from five to seven artillery and antiaircraft divisions together with 1,000 tanks waiting to come south to stage the last battle in 1972.

In recent months the communists have run up and down from Hanoi to Paris, The USSR, and Red China and have made contacts with the United States time and again, acting as if they truly want peace in 1 or 2 days, with one solution or another. But in reality, they merely aim at exploiting the U.S. voters, dividing the people and the U.S. Government, dividing the United States and ourselves, and at the same time once again deceiving world public opinion.

In fact, no words, gestures or acts on their part have indicated that they have had any good will in the past 4 years or more.

On the contrary, troops, weapons and ammunition have been continuously sent from the north to the south, Laos, and Cambodia to prolong the war of aggression.

After the failure of the maneuver to impose a coalition government on the south, the lackey tool called the NFLSV on 11 September 1972 had to play again the "three-segment national concord government" farce. On 1 September 1972 the Hanoi ring-leaders ostentatiously voiced their support, and later on this farce was again welcomed and encouraged by their imperialist and colonialist masters.

Our government has officially rejected this treacherous solution and its illogical formula.

Political, religious, and popular organizations, senators, representatives and local elected organizations throughout the country have vehemently denounced this deceitful maneuver and this tricky farce played by the communists in collusion with the colonialists and supported by their lackeys--a cunning Vietnamese political group. In this south, all the RVN people have abhorred the colonialists and communists to the highest extent. Therefore, the communists and the colonialists are no longer able to deceive anyone and only a group of their lackeys will respond to their words and do what they are told to do.

I referred to these points clearly during my talk to the compatriots, combatants, and cadres throughout the country in the ancient capital of Hue on the night of 20 September 1972.

Today the RVN Government once again confirms:

In a solution for the war in Vietnam, North Vietnam is the aggressor from the outside. Naturally it will not be allowed to enjoy anything or any right in the south. On the contrary, it has the duty to end all acts of aggression in the south and withdraw all of its tools of aggression to the north.

Moreover, the north must compensate the southern people for all the damage and sorrow caused them by their infiltration during the past 18 years.

In a solution to the war in all of Indochina, North Vietnam also bears a similar responsibility toward the Khmer Republic and Laos.

In everything concerning the RVN, the Khmer Republic, and Laos, North Vietnam must respect these three Indochinese countries' territory, sovereignty, independence, freedom, and peace. First of all, it must not interfere in or stir up domestic political affairs in any of them.

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In the south a political solution is a domestic affair of the south. It is a right and responsibility of the southern people to settle it among themselves. No one is allowed to interfere.

The South Vietnamese people now have a unique constitutional, legal government. Every domestic political solution and problem of the south must be approved by the present constitutional, legal RVN Government and by the South Vietnamese people.

Therefore, only the present RVN Government is competent to discuss and approve any domestic political solution for the south and no one has the right to do it in its place.

The RVN Government and the northern administration would discuss only what concerns the two parts.

The RVN is always ready to do this.

The RVN Government interferes in no domestic affairs of the northern administration and people. Therefore, it requires that the north absolutely do the same with the south.

The settlement of the southern domestic political problem is a domestic affair of the southern people, that is, an affair between the present constitutional, legal RVN Government and its adversary side called the "southern liberation front."

The RVN Government has declared many times that it stands ready to conduct discussions with it at any place.

Any domestic political solution for the south must be based on the principle of the national right to self-determination and carried out in the spirit of the national reconciliation of the South Vietnamese people and the South Vietnamese people only.

This national right to self-determination must be seriously implemented through democratic procedures that really respect the people's absolute freedom of choice and determination and this spirit of national reconciliation must be implemented honestly.

Besides the direct participation of all components of the South Vietnamese people, broad international control or observation is very necessary to certify and insure freedom, democracy and fairness to any of these procedures.

No prefabricated mechanism, in any form whatsoever, can be imposed to force the RVN Government and people to accept such a mechanism.

Also, the RVN Government and people will accept no formula, no matter how many segments it would have, of any organization, that is a result of an arbitrary decision and has no rational basis.

What is decided by the South Vietnamese people means that everything must faithfully reflect their will that is manifested through their free, democratic choice and decision. Only if this is accomplished can it be said that the southern people's right to self-determination is truly respected and that the political situation in the south is reflected truly, correctly and faithfully.

IV. 3 Oct 72

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SOUTH VIETNAM

Dear gentlemen: The points which I have presented and which are related to the restoration of peace and the settlement of the internal political problem in South Vietnam, are also the basic principles for a peace solution which we have sought and are seeking and which we expect to come soon to us.

The peace, which we have sought and are seeking, is a peace based on the reason and honor of everyone and for everyone. This peace also bears a special Vietnamese characteristic, which is national love and concord and the elimination of hatred and the great national unity among the Vietnamese people themselves who are of the same breed.

These basic principles can be summed up as follows:

Militarily, all foreign countries must withdraw their armies to their territories and must not invade any other neighboring countries directly or indirectly or carry out infiltration and acts of sabotage, organize riot-inciting activities and terroristic acts, or interfere in their internal affairs.

Politically, on RVN territory we advocate a policy of reconciliation so that people from the other side of the frontline can participate in a peaceful manner and without the use of military strength or violence in the common activities of the nation on the basis of the right of self-determination according to genuinely free and democratic procedures.

Regarding the problems between the south and the north, we propose that the two administrations hold serious discussions on the relations between the south and the north on the basis of peaceful coexistence while waiting for favorable conditions to achieve national unification.

These fundamental points were pointed out repeatedly in our basic six-point peace plan of 7 April 1969, our cease-fire proposal of 8 October 1970, our political solution for the internal affairs of South Vietnam on 11 July 1969, and in our eight-point solution of 27 January 1972 in which we mentioned the procedures for the holding of the elections.

These do not include many other occasions when we displayed our good will through such concrete acts as our readiness to hold talks with any one of them at any time and in any place to discuss any problems without posing any preliminary conditions. We also carried out many cease-fires, released many disabled POW's or POW's who were affected by incurable diseases, and realized the exchange of healthy POW's.

Our proposals have become more and more open-minded, broadened, and sensible and reasonable. We have made maximum concessions based on the right of self-determination and the spirit of national reconciliation.

Meanwhile, the communists have become more and more deceitful and stubborn through their increasing unreasonable and insolent proposals. They want to eliminate that which belongs to and is established by the South Vietnamese people in order to impose a communist regime disguised as a coalition government.

If the communists really have good will for peace as they have frequently ballyhooed, let them end all their deceitful political maneuvers and hold serious talks with the RVN Government to discuss the procedures to end the war on the basis of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination as they have constantly advocated and demanded that it be realized at all costs.

Once again we tell the communists that the door to peace is still open wide, that the south's good will for peace is still maintained and that the arms of rational concord continue to wait for them. However, to have peace, the communists must talk directly and seriously with the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and must not believe that the problem between us and them can be solved through a treacherous trick or deceitful solution.

Dear gentlemen, because the Vietnamese war is of international importance and is related to international peace and general international stabilization and because the Vietnamese situation must be placed within the framework of Southeast Asia, the Republic of Vietnam has also expressed its stand on the relationship between us and other countries.

Recently the problem of neutralizing Vietnam, Indochina and Southeast Asia has been frequently posed.

Nevertheless, the terms "neutrality" and "neutralization" remain so far very vague.

On this occasion, I wish to express the stand of the Republic of Vietnam Government more clearly.

As for our Republic of Vietnam, it has many times stated that it advocates no aggression against anyone, no participation in any military alliance, and will not allow any nation to use its own territory to invade or threaten any other nation.

The Republic of Vietnam has also asserted its readiness to solve the present war on the basis of the basic principles of the 1954 Geneva accords. In our 27 January 1972 eight-point solution, we proposed in point three that "South Vietnam and other nations in Indochina must follow a foreign policy consistent with the military stipulations of the 1954 Geneva accords."

These stipulations prohibit the introduction of additional troops and military personnel into Vietnam and forbid the south and the north to participate in any military alliance. They do not allow anyone to use their own territories to resume the war or serve an aggressive policy.

Regarding Indochina, the Republic of Vietnam has asserted many times that the neutrality of Cambodia and Laos must be respected. In the fourth point of our eight-point solution of 27 January 1972, we proposed that both sides would respect the 1954 and 1962 Geneva agreements respectively on Indochina and Laos, that there would be no foreign interference in the Indochinese peoples' internal affairs, and that the Indochinese peoples would settle their own problems.

It is thought that any new solution on the neutralization of Indochina cannot provide any points that are more concrete any constructive than the above point.

If the world "neutrality" is conceived genuinely, the Republic of Vietnam's innate stand can be considered as the most constructive one.

The North Vietnamese communists have brazenly violated the neutrality of Laos and Cambodia and trampled on the Geneva agreements which they signed to invade the Republic of Vietnam.

In their aggression in Indochina they have enjoyed the important aid of communist countries, especially the USSR and communist China. Meanwhile, they have shouted for the "neutralization" of South Vietnam. So, objective people note that while speaking of the "neutralization" of South Vietnam, the communists and procommunists actually want to use that apparently attractive label to promote a one-way solution and to exert pressure to demand that our allied armed forces not be present in this country and refrain from exercising the public right to self-defense.

Meanwhile, they do not say a word about their aggressive activities in Indochina, nor do they mention the considerable communist Chinese and Soviet aid to North Vietnam in this aggression.

For this reason, I resolutely oppose communist-style neutrality because this is a malicious communist plot aimed at paralyzing and isolating us in our self-defense struggle and then at annexing our country and then all of southeast Asia.

This war was not created by the Republic of Vietnam because we have been conducting a self-defense struggle in our own country. So, he who deals with the "neutralization" solution must deal with the aggressors and pay special attention to the importance of an effective control and guarantee system in the neutralization solution, because international communism has not yet given up its aggressive and expansionist policy.

I am convinced that all the Vietnamese people and you, their representatives in this National Assembly, agree with me on this point.

Regarding the problem of neutralizing Southeast Asia posed recently by a number of countries in this zone, we must realize that the noncommunist states in this zone have neither aggressive designs nor means to carry out aggression. They only want the powers outside the zone to refrain from intervening in it so as to avoid turning it into a zone of conflict among themselves.

In this problem we see that the "neutralization" of Southeast Asia depends on the attitude of powers, especially the powers plotting and having means to wage aggression, and on their willingness to give up their plot to rule over this zone directly or indirectly. For this reason, the main practical question is to neutralize these powers' activities in this zone.

The United States has displayed its good will by withdrawing its troops. Peace will be restored soon if the USSR and communist China show their good will likewise.

The powers must control themselves and each other on the basic principle that no power is allowed to take advantage of the territory or means of any country in this zone to invade other countries. Moreover, they must not encourage or support the so-called "liberation war" to expand their influence, because this will result in changing the balance of forces in the zone and prolonging the chaotic situation in Southeast Asia.

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In this troubled Southeast Asia, the way to establish a lasting peace is not to eliminate the public self-defense right of small countries, but to neutralize all activities of the powers and paralyze the activities of the powers having aggressive designs so the countries in the zone can properly exercise the national right to self-determination without being under the pressure of any force coming from anywhere.

What is important is that all powers concerned must respect these points.

In the joint communique between the United States and communist China on 17 February 1972, the Peking administration and the United States declared : "No side will seek to establish its rule in the Asian-Pacific zone and both sides oppose the plot of any other country or group of countries to establish its or their domination in this zone."

The Peking administration also declared that it "opposes all foreign invasion, interference and control and all instigations from outside" and that it "advocates the withdrawal of all foreign troops to their own territories."

These principles are not strange to us. What is most necessary is that these points must be understood sincerely and applied to all sides and not to one side only to allow the communists to deceive and deprive the free countries of their right to self-defense and mutual solidarity and therefore to carry out their expansionist scheme.

In addition to solving certain problems among the powers to restore peace to Southeast Asia, the Southeast Asian countries must also seek to reach a common conception and, if possible, a common plan to establish and safeguard peace and to stabilize this zone.

No country or group of countries in Southeast Asia can consider its or their peace stable if a neighboring Southeast Asian state is invaded. On the other hand, if the powers are not allowed to intervene in Southeast Asia in order to establish a peaceful and stable zone, the Southeast Asian countries must on their part agree that they will cooperate to oppose any foreign interference, will refrain from invading another country, will allow no one to use their territories to invade other countries, and will collaborate in a friendly way on the basis of equality and mutual respect for each other's sovereignty.

At present, Southeast Asian nations, though under different political regimes, have expressed similar basic views. These views oppose foreign intervention and advocate national self-determination and peaceful coexistence irrespective of political and social regimes. They also advocate solving all differences in the area by peaceful means.

In 1955, 29 Afro-Asian countries including the RVN and North Vietnam attended the Bandung conference and approved a joint declaration of the conference that upheld the aforementioned principles.

In the present situation, I think it is time to convene a conference of all 10 Southeast Asian countries including North Vietnam. North Vietnam should participate in this conference if it has a sincere desire for peace. This is necessary for it to display its much-heralded good will for peace.

The proposed conference is designed to find appropriate procedures for establishing a lasting peace for this area and laying a foundation for and establishing economic and cultural relations among the nations in the area. The proposed conference is also designed to lay a basis for the relationship between the countries in the area and the big foreign powers on the basis of these principles.

If the proposal for such an all-Southeast Asia conference is responded to, we will be glad to invite Southeast Asian countries to come and meet in the RVN capital or we will be ready to participate in that conference in any other place chosen by the majority of the Southeast Asian countries.

In past years, the war in South Vietnam has created among international public opinion the concern that this war may spread and lead to a dangerous conflict among the great powers. Therefore, an all-Southeast Asia conference with the participation of both South and North Vietnam would be a historic event which might lead to the building of a lasting peace for all of Southeast Asia.

The foreign policies of the Republic of Vietnam are based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, people's self-determination, and friendly relations with all the nations which truly respect the independence and freedom of the Republic of Vietnam.

Therefore, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam always accclaims all efforts and is ready to attend any international conference in order to solve all problems and to restore peace and stabilization to Vietnam, Indochina and all of Southeast Asia.

Dear messrs the chairman of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives, gentlemen,

With the experiences gained by a great number of our combatants, cadres and compatriots through sorrow, mourning, tears, sweat, blood and bones for one-fourth of a century and in the face of the stubbornness and treachery of our enemy--the communist aggressors--who have not for the first time but have countless times brazenly carried out aggressive acts and who will carry them out again, I wish to present to you gentlemen and the nation the following points coming from the bottom of my heart:

No one understands the communists more clearly than we do, and no one has more or as many sorrowful experiences with the communists than we.

No one will bear the responsibility and admit the fault before our national history and children and grandchildren for us, if this country is lost.

No one can more firmly guarantee that South Vietnam will not fall into the communists' hands than we at present.

Therefore, we must:

First, not let ourselves be rocked to sleep and never forget annexation and that for the communists only they themselves have the right to survive;

Second, understand that national concord, national unity, and elimination of hatred do not mean generosity, sleep, or allowing the communists to rule the roost and presenting them with opportunities for annexing this country and eliminating our people;

Finally, understand that in the face of the loss or survival of our country and the 17 million southern people there can be no stand which may be called firm and there can be only one stand, which is the stand of loss or no loss of the country.

I wish you gentlemen a very successful session.

Respectful salutations to the chairman of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives and to all of you gentlemen.

Saigon, 2 October 1972.

MME BINH COMMENTS IN STOCKHOLM ON SETTLEMENT

Stockholm Domestic Service in Swedish 1730 GMT 29 Sep 72 L

[Report by Lars (?Suneson)]

[Text] Foreign Minister of the South Vietnamese Provisional Revolutionary Government Mme Thi Binh has arrived in Sweden. She arrived at Arlanda [Stockholm airport] a few hours ago. In Stockholm she is to represent the NLF at the party congress of the Social Democratic Party. Mme Binh is the chief delegate of the NLF at the peace talks in Paris. She met the press at Arlanda.

The first question asked of Mme Binh at the press conference at Arlanda concerned the rumors about a peace agreement on Vietnam said to be in sight. But Mme Binh denied that a peace agreement is topical. If it were true, the Vietnamese would be the first to rejoice, but regrettably it is not true.

Mme Binh pointed out that U.S. bombings of North and South Vietnam continue with undiminished force. A solution to those topical questions is very distant, she said. Mme Binh said of the situation in Vietnam that the offensive of the revolutionary side continues with undiminished force, and in that way the peace situation is improved, but this does not concern the peace talks in Paris.

[Question--interlocutor unidentified] As is known, the Provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam, the PRG, has proposed a three-segment coalition in South Vietnam. What is going to look like? Are the segments equal?

[Mme Binh in French, followed by Swedish translation] We have started with realities: There are two administrations, two armies and three different political forces in South Vietnam. The three-segment government will consist of representatives of the PRG, the Saigon administration with the exception of President Thieu, and of other social, political and religious movements in the country. These three forces will be on an equal footing as regards the number of persons and power. How this government is to be elected is not a particularly significant question right now. The PRG is a coalition government and it is the strongest force; but we want a political settlement of the conflict, and it is in order to show our will for peace that we have proposed this solution. The three-segment government will be of a temporary nature; its chief task will be to organize free democratic elections in South Vietnam.

A cease-fire in South Vietnam must lead to a permanent peace. For that reason the military and political problems must be solved. For that reason we have not accepted the proposals for a cease-fire made in May by President Nixon, who now does not believe in an imminent peace agreement.

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Questions Three will Be Certain to Ask

- (1) What is meant by a cease fire "in place" -- who determines who is in place where? whose maps are used.
- (2) How is total US withdrawal defined?
- (3) Are the GVN personnel held prisoner included in the release of all POWs provision?
- (4) How is the guarantee of end to infiltration to be monitored?
- (5) How is the promise re an end of causative and function sanctuaries to be monitored?
What about supply stockpiles?
- (6) How does the "replacement of equipment" provision impinge on the GVN's future capabilities?
What about upgrading (e.g. replacing 105s with 120s)
What about modernization (e.g. VNAF).
- (7) What about PVA forces?

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Appraiser

(1) Security situation of GVN to accept
c/f in place.] ✓

(2) What would traffic bear on furnishing loose
prisoners GVN holds - What would Thieu release

(3) If on Tuesday // confirm.

Other PRC names

GVN names

3rd force: PRC now's half

GVN now's half

↳ provide "guidance" to two existing
gov'ts: c/f, elections, reconstitutions
of liberty = safety advisory, no
governing authority.

Under assumption that facade arrangement
agreed to: ~~fix term which protects Thieu - but negotiable~~
What will be Thieu's

↳ a. Recognizes PRC as Gov't w/ forces &
territory
- No specific provision for PVA withdrawal

↳ H to H. ?